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Borough of Appleby

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE YEAR

1952

LIVERPOOL

C. TINLING AND COMPANY, LIMITED, PRINTERS, 53, VICTORIA STREET

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To the Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors of the Borough of Appleby.

SIR, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to submit to you my Annual Report upon the health of the Borough during the year 1952.

There are signs of better unity between the hospitals, general practice and the public health services. The upheaval of the National Health Service Act of 1946 drove deep schisms into the old established partnership. Good will and professional loyalties are gradually restoring a unity of purpose.

Undue emphasis still lies on disease and its treatment, but the ever mounting cost is a solemn reminder that prevention might be better. The cherished Garden of Eden now has the serpent of fiscal expediency.

In the field of preventive medicine the scope is unlimited for those who have the courage to look beyond their immediate surroundings. The service has a proud record in the past and an unquenchable faith in the future.

I wish to acknowledge the help and ready co-operation of my colleague, the County Medical Officer of Health, and also the assistance afforded to me by the local general medical practitioners.

I am indebted also to the Chief Sanitary Inspector and his staff for the spirit of teamwork which exists in my department, and for the fund of local knowledge which they have laid at my disposal.

I have the honour to be,

Sir, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant.

FRANK T. MADGE,

Medical Officer of Health.

NATURAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE DISTRICT.

Area of the Borough in acres	...	...	...	...	1,877
Population (Registrar-General's mid-year estimate)	...	...	...	...	1,698
„ (1951 Census)	...	...	...	...	1,704
Inhabited Houses	...	...	...	...	527
Rateable Value	...	...	...	...	£10,971
Product of a Penny Rate	...	...	...	...	£45
Rate in the pound levied in 1952-53	...	...	...	...	22/-
Of which the County Rate was	...	...	...	...	17/9

The ancient Borough of Appleby is the County Town of Westmorland, and lies on a beautiful winding reach of the River Eden beneath the long escarpment of the Pennine Range. The Town clusters compactly on the rising ground of the river banks and is dominated by the historic Castle. It is a small market town which mainly serves the surrounding farming countryside, but on one side the main trunk highway follows the old Roman road which passes over into north-east England. These geographical features determine the natural lines of communication and therefore influence the spread of infectious disease.

The geology of the Borough is mainly Penrith sandstone in the Permian System but in the northern portion there are some purple sandstones and shales in the Millstone Grit series of the Carboniferous System, with alluvial deposits and terraces along the river, and some glacial drift. These geological characteristics are of great significance in the supervision of water supplies and sewerage as well as affecting the economics of the Borough.

The climate is equable and the town is well sheltered from the prevailing winds. The air is generally very clear and there is little mist or fog. The rainfall varies between 30 and 40 inches a year, and snow may be expected for one or two weeks in the late winter.

The Borough is primarily a market town in character, and many of the small industries and crafts are ancillary to agriculture. There are also the following industries and occupations which provide local employment and bring a measure of prosperity to the Borough :—

Egg Packing Station
Milk Depot
Railway Work.

In addition to these local industries the Borough receives seasonal tourist and business traffic from the Trunk Road. The variety of these local opportunities for employment has kept Appleby happily free from unemployment and has provided that economic security which is a most important factor in the maintenance of the public health.

STAFF.

Name.	Qualifications.	Office.	Whole or Part-time.	Other Offices.
F. T. Madge.	M.D., Ch.B., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.	Medical Officer of Health.	Part.	M.O.H. Combined County Districts of Westmorland
T. E. Owens.	M.S.I.A.	Sanitary Inspector	Part.	—
B. M. Machell.	—	Clerk to Medical Officer of Health.	Part.	Clerk to M.O.H. Combined County Districts of Westmorland

Mr. Owens is engaged on a part-time basis of six sessions per week as the small size of the Borough does not justify a full-time appointment. There were no staff changes during the year.

VITAL STATISTICS.

The following extracts are made from information supplied by the Registrar-General, with figures for 1951 for comparison :—

Area of the District in acres 1,877

	1951	1952
Estimated resident population (mid-year) ...	1,739	1,698
Live Births. Legitimate— males	19	7
females	10	7
Illegitimate— males	—	1
females	—	1
Total	29	16
Rate per 1,000 population	16·6	9·4
Rate for England and Wales	15·5	15·3
Still Births. Legitimate— males	—	—
females	—	—
Illegitimate— males	—	—
females	—	—
Total	—	—
Rate per 1,000 total (live and still)		
births	—	—
Rate per 1,000 population	—	—
Rate for England and Wales	0·36	0·35
Deaths. Males	11	14
Females	8	10
Total	19	24
Rate per 1,000 population	10·9	14·1
Rate for England and Wales	12·5	11·3

	1951	1952
Infantile Deaths (under 1 year)		
Legitimate	1	—
Rate per 1,000 legitimate live births...	34·4	—
Illegitimate	—	—
Rate per 1,000 illegitimate live births	—	—
Total Deaths under 1 year	1	—
Rate per 1,000 live births	34·4	—
Rate for England and Wales ...	29·6	27·6
Neonatal Deaths (under 1 month)		
Total Neonatal Deaths	1	—
Rate per 1,000 live births	34·4	—
Deaths from Diarrhoea and Enteritis (under 2 years)		
Deaths	—	—
Rate per 1,000 live births	—	—
Rate for England and Wales ...	1·4	1·1
Maternal Mortality		
Deaths	—	—
Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births	—	—
Rate for England and Wales ...	0·79	0·72

Deaths from certain causes :—	1951	1952
Cancer	5	7
Measles	Nil	Nil
Whooping Cough	Nil	Nil

The main causes of death were :—

Vascular lesions of nervous system ...	—	7
Cancer	—	7

On account of the small population of the Borough the changes from last year's figures have little statistical significance.

PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OF INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

Public Health Act, 1936. Sections 145-170.

National Health Service Act, 1946, Part III.

Whooping Cough was prevalent during the first quarter of the year and was associated with an epidemic which affected most of the Eden Valley. A few cases of scarlet fever occurred in the late summer, but on the whole it was a fortunate year.

Hospital and Ambulance Arrangements for Infectious Diseases.

National Health Service Act, 1946. Parts II and III.

The Regional Hospital Board, Newcastle, provides infectious diseases hospitals at Penrith and Carlisle to serve the area, and ambulance transport is provided by the County Council. Disinfection of premises is carried out by your Sanitary Inspector.

TUBERCULOSIS TABLE.

Age Periods.	NEW CASES.				DEATHS.			
	Respiratory.		Non-Respiratory.		Respiratory.		Non-Respiratory.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
25	1	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
35	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
45	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
55	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
65	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL ...	3	3	—	—	—	—	—	—

Four of the new cases were discovered by the mass miniature radiography unit which visited the Borough during the year.

The number of tuberculous patents on the register at the year end were :—

Respiratory	...	...	...	...	...	...	10
Non-respiratory	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Total	...	...	...	...	...	...	11

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES TABLE.

DISEASE.	Total.	Ages.												Admitted to Hospital.	Deaths.
		-1	1-	2-	3-	4-	5-	10-	15-	20-	35-	45-	65-		
Scarlet Fever	7	—	—	—	I	3	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Whooping Cough...	24	I	2	3	2	5	II	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Erysipelas	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	
Total	33	I	2	3	3	8	14	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	

HOUSING.

Housing Acts, 1936 and 1949.

There are 527 inhabited houses in the Borough and an average of 3.1 persons per house. Some overcrowding exists in the poorer houses. The detailed survey of houses was continued during the year and action commenced to secure some improvements in five cases.

Many of the houses are very old, damp and decayed, and seriously lacking in the amenities now regarded as desirable for decent living. No serious attempt to deal with these houses under the Housing Acts has been made during the past quarter of a century, and the arrears of neglect mean that much squalor will have to be endured for many years to come.

The first step was taken in 1951 by dealing with one of twelve official Representations which have been outstanding since 1949. The owner of one of the very sub-standard cottages in Holme Street offered an undertaking not to relet the house for human habitation, and on acceptance the place now remains unoccupied. I hope that similar action will follow for the rest of the block.

Your requirements for new houses remains about 80, and it is hoped that advantage will be taken of the financial grants available under the Housing Act, 1949, to recondition some of the older premises.

Progress at the year end on your Scattergate Estate was that 16 houses were completed and 10 were under construction. The site will finally provide for 70 or 80 houses. By private enterprise 2 houses were under construction.

The method adopted for the selection of tenants of Council houses is one which combines the "points" scheme and personal selection. Each applicant completes a form and is awarded points from which a short list is compiled, and from this the personal selection is made.

The property owned by the Council included 49 dwelling houses exclusive of those in course of erection. Maintenance work is normally performed by local contractors.

Typical pre-war Council houses have a rateable value of £12 and the limits of the rent scales are 11/6d. to 13/6d. per week, with an average of 11/8d., exclusive of rates. Your post-war houses have a rateable value of £18 and the rents are 18/6d. per week exclusive of rates.

Verminous Houses.

Public Health Act, 1936. Sections 83-85.

The average standard of cleanliness is high and no action was necessary during the year.

Nuisance re Dwellings.

Public Health Act, 1936. Sections 91-100.

Informal action was taken in 15 cases. No statutory notices were served.

Dangerous Buildings.

Public Health Act, 1936. Section 58.

One case was dealt with during the year.

Tents, Vans, Sheds and Movable Dwellings.

Public Health Act, 1936. Sections 268-269.

There is no licensed camping site in the Borough and no individual camping licence was in force during the year. Unlicensed camping sites are limited to occasional use only, intermittent camping takes place along the banks of the River Eden during the fishing season and is generally not objectionable.

Camping for periods of not more than four days each occurs twice a year by the staff of travelling fairgrounds and shows which park and operate in the Butts, where public conveniences for both sexes serve the sanitary requirements.

A more serious nuisance occurs during the June Fair, which lasts approximately five days. Camping on the Roman Road adjacent to Gallows Hill and on the Longmarton Road is done on a very large scale. Tents, motor trailers, and horse-drawn caravans assemble in hundreds along the roadsides, and the occupants use the fields and hedgerows for all sanitary purposes, which leave after their departure a foul and polluted area. A Committee was formed to examine the possibility of moving the campers off the roads on to the Gallows Hill and a provisional scheme was made to provide an access roadway and temporary latrines with chemical closets, and a proper water supply. During 1950 the site was ploughed and re-seeded, but it cannot be used for camping until the turf is fully established. Meanwhile the nuisance must be endured.

WATER.

The public water supply is adequate in quantity and probably satisfactory in quality. The result of laboratory examination of water is set out in Appendix "A" from samples taken during the year.

The source of the supply is at the foot of the Pennines from two natural springs at Bank Wood in the Parish of Hilton. These springs arise near the junction of St. Bees sandstone and the red shale strata and apparently have a deep source. Their yield is remarkably constant throughout the year.

There is some risk of surface drainage contamination which needs constant observation. A detailed laboratory examination of various collecting chambers showed that slight pollution from an adjacent cattle trough can occur, and I am not very happy about the presence of the military works which are immediately uphill from the source. Although the dangerous latrine has been dismantled there remains the risk of the soldiers polluting the ground around the artillery observation tower.

The water is quite soft, having only seven degrees of hardness, and is suitable for all domestic purposes. The storage capacity of the covered and ventilated reservoir is approximately 60,000 gallons, with top and bottom levels of 642·51 feet and 637·00 feet above Ordnance Datum. The site is enclosed and protected by a stone perimeter wall. The water is untreated.

The distribution mains are cast-iron with ball hydrants now of considerable age. As safeguards against contamination the town water is sampled at monthly intervals.

500 out of the 527 houses in the Borough have water laid on, and about two dozen are still served by old-fashioned standpipes. During the year indoor supplies have been provided in 5 houses and notices are still outstanding on 8 houses to secure the conversion.

The average daily consumption of water from the public mains is 98,000 gallons which is equivalent to 54 gallons per head per day. This relatively high figure is due in part to waste.

Although the supply is adequate in quantity the level of the head works makes the pressure in the higher parts of the Borough rather poor. If development of this high land is contemplated in the future it will be necessary to consider boosting the supply.

SEWERAGE.

Public Health Act, 1936, Sections 14, 15, 47 and 87.

The Borough is well equipped with water closets, 520 out of a total of 527 have either one or more, although a number of houses share a common convenience with neighbours. There are 8 privies on outlying farms which are not near the sewerage system. The majority of the closets are connected to the main sewer only nine being served by cesspits or septic tanks.

Public conveniences are situated at two separate points in the town, one in the centre and the other in Bridge Street, with an additional men's urinal on the Sands adjacent to the Shire Hall. The convenience in the town serves males only, with two water closets and four urinal stalls. The Bridge Street conveniences serve both sexes, having two water closets for females and one water closet and three urinal stalls for males. The urinal on the Sands is in very poor state of repair, and is exposed to view to the many persons of both sexes using the adjacent Food Office. A contract has been let for the construction of new conveniences on the Sands.

The sewerage mains are mostly dual purpose, taking both surface water and foul drainage. Many of the old drains are of bastard size and very often laid with open joints. Many of these defects have been remedied during excavations for other purposes. A survey has been made and gradual replacement will be effected. The main sewer crosses the river near the Butts by an inverted siphon and thence flows through a brick-lined tunnel for 440 yards under Holme Wood to the river bank at St. Nicholas Wood, whence it is piped for the remaining 320 yards to the disposal plant.

The sewerage plant consists of two alternatively operating precipitation tanks from which the overflow passes in a main earthenware feeder for broad irrigation over about four acres of land alongside the river bank. The run off is piped into the main outfall for discharge into the Eden.

The plant is obsolete and unsatisfactory in operation. The absence of storm water tanks is probably not very important as the volume of the main river at those times provides great dilution. There are no sludge drying beds and the hand-scooped sludge has to be deposited around the precipitation tanks. The area of the land used for irrigation is too small for the population served, and the soil has become sewage sick. Many of the earthenware pipes have been broken and the land is so clogged that many of the beds have merely a superficial flow into the outfall main. The outfall into the Eden shows a cloudy trail but the dilution by the main river is very considerable.

The whole plant needs reconstruction, but the financial resources of your Council, and the handicap of your Borough status in the matter of grants, place you at a disadvantage compared with your rural neighbours. It is proposed to spend about £200 on improvements during 1953 but these can be only palliative measures.

PUBLIC CLEANSING.

Public Health Act, 1936, Sections 72, 76 and 77.

Refuse is collected from the whole of the area of the Borough of Appleby by Council employees with the use of a dual purpose vehicle.

Disposal of refuse is by controlled tipping at Gallows Hill. The tip is fenced in and treated against vermin. The salvage of waste paper is not done as it is uneconomical.

Street cleansing is carried out systematically twice weekly in the town centre and as often as necessary on the district and county roads. The public conveniences are cleansed and disinfected by a part-time caretaker.

The average annual volume of refuse is estimated as 1,500 cubic yards.

FOOD AND DRUGS.

Under the Food and Drugs Act, 1938, and the Orders and Regulations made thereunder, the Borough has the duty of carrying out specific responsibilities in the registration of certain food premises, in the supervision of milk and dairies, and in the wide field of protection of its citizens from food-borne diseases. The County Council are responsible for detecting the adulteration of food-stuffs and the supervision of the sale of drugs.

Precautions against Contamination of Food.

Food and Drugs Act, 1938, Section 13.

Periodical inspection of food premises has been carried out under Section 13 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938, and informal action taken where necessary. Proposals have been made for raising the standard of cleanliness and general hygiene in these places. I am confident that traders are anxious to achieve a very high level of hygiene in their premises.

By-laws for securing cleanliness in food handling came into operation during 1951 and it is hoped that their educative effect, rather than their penal provisions, will be valuable to both the trade and the public.

Registration of Ice-cream Premises.

Food and Drugs Act, 1938, Section 14.

Ice-Cream (Heat Treatment) Regulations, 1947.

Under Section 14 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938, there are two registrations for the manufacture and sale of ice-cream and seven registrations for storage and sale only.

A code of requirements for ice-cream traders was formulated for their guidance in 1949. Seven bacteriological laboratory examinations carried out during 1952 revealed 2 grade one, 1 grade two, 2 grade three, and 2 grade four ice-creams.

Registration of Prepared Meat Premises.

Food and Drugs Act, 1938, Section 14.

At the year end registration of sausage manufactories and potted, preserved and pressed meat, and pickled food preparing premises under Section 14 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938 were approved in respect of 2 premises.

Registration of Dairies and Dairymen.

Milk and Dairies Regulations.

Since October 1949 your Council has been responsible for the supervision of milk distributors and dairies which are not dairy farms. Your registrations at the end of 1952 were :—

Distributors	...	...	1
Dairies	...	...	3

Cleanliness of Retail Milk Supplies and Tuberculous Milk.

Food and Drugs Act, 1936, Section 68.

Results of sampling for cleanliness and keeping quality were as follows :—

Ungraded Milks :—

Methylene Blue—Satisfactory 6, Unsatisfactory 2.

T.T. Milks :—

Methylene Blue—Satisfactory 5, Unsatisfactory 1.

12 samples were submitted for biological examination for tuberculosis but all were reported to be negative.

Milk-borne Diseases.

No epidemics of milk-borne disease occurred during the year, and therefore no action was required to stop any milk supplies or restrict the activities of milk handlers under Part VII of the Milk and Dairies Regulations 1949.

Designated Milks.

Milk (Special Designations) Regulations, 1949.

Your Council is responsible for the granting of dealers' and supplementary annual licences for the sale of tuberculin tested and accredited milks.

Such licences in force during 1952 were :—

Dealers' licences (Form B)	2
Supplementary Licence (Form D)	1

Slaughterhouse and Knackers' Yards.

Food and Drugs Act, 1938, Sections 57-61.

One slaughterhouse is licensed by the Borough Council under the Food and Drugs Act, 1938, but no slaughtering except pigs has been done, as all meat is dealt with at the central abattoir in Penrith.

Condemnation of Foodstuffs.

Food and Drugs Act, 1938, Sections 10-18.

The following foodstuffs were condemned during the year as unfit for human consumption :—

5 tins of ham.
1 tin of luncheon meat.
104 tins of other foods.

GENERAL SANITARY INSPECTION.

Since the appointment in 1949 of your part-time Sanitary Inspector there has been a very welcome improvement in making good the long-standing arrears as well as maintaining the day to day responsibilities of the Council in their public health function.

The six sessions, or notional half-days, per week devoted to Sanitary Inspection seem satisfactory. Various inspections have been carried out beyond those detailed in the special sections of this Report.

The maintenance of a reasonable standard of repair in houses has been difficult owing to the shortage of building labour for small jobbing work.

Offensive Trades.

Public Health Act, 1936, Section 107.

There are no offensive trades within the meaning of the Act carried on in the Borough.

Factories.

Factories Act, 1937.

There were four factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 of the

Inspections.

Premises.	Number on Register.	Number of		
		Inspec- tions.	Written Notices.	Occupiers prosecuted.
Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities ...	4	4	—	—
Factories not included in (1), in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authority	14	20	—	—
Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers' premises)	—	—	—	—
Total	18	24	—	—

Cases in which Defects were Found.

Particulars.	Number of cases in which Defects were found.				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted.
	Found	Remedied.	Referred.		
			To H.M. Inspector.	By H.M. Inspector.	
Want of cleanliness (S.1)	—	—	—	—	—
Overcrowding (S.2) ...	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature (S.3) ...	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation (S.4) ...	—	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6)	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7)					
(a) Insufficient	—	—	—	—	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective	3	3	—	—	—
(c) Not separate for sexes	—	—	—	—	—
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outwork) ...	—	—	—	—	—
Total	3	3	—	—	—

Factories Act, 1937, are the responsibility of the Borough Council for enforcement and 14 in which Section 7 is enforced. 24 inspections were made and in no case was it necessary to issue a written notice.

No prosecutions were required. There were no basement bakehouses.

Three defects were found and remedied. No references were received from H.M. Inspector and none were made to him.

National Assistance Act, 1948.

No action was required under Section 47 for the removal to suitable premises of persons in need of care and attention.

Shops Act, 1950.

These duties have been periodically carried out.

Common Lodging Houses.

Public Health Act, 1936. Part IX.

There were no common lodging houses within the Borough.

Rent Restriction Acts.

No action was required.

Smoke Abatement.

Public Health Act, 1936. Sections 101-106.

There were no cases for action during the year.

Pests.

Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, 1949.

Rat poisoning treatments have been given to the sewers and the refuse tip during the year. Inspection of other premises has been made when required and the occupiers given advice.

Laboratory Services.

Public Health Act, 1936. Section 196.

Satisfactory laboratory facilities were available both at Carlisle and Kendal for all public health purposes. During 1947 a new scheme was inaugurated by the Public Health Laboratory Service for the performance of all laboratory examinations of a preventative and epidemiological nature, free of charge, to the Local Authority and the patient. This should do much to encourage the freer use of modern technical diagnostic methods by general practitioners and by your Health Department.

Bylaws.

The Bylaws in force on matters relating to public health were :—

Building Bylaws.

Food Handling.

New Legislation.

The Pet Animals Act, 1951, became operative on 1st April, 1952.

APPENDIX "A."

LABORATORY EXAMINATIONS OF THE PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY.

Nature of Test.	Standards Max.	Head Works.	Crotty Reservoir.	Town's Main.
Pr. Colo 37°	3-10	0	0	0
Faecal coli/strep.	0	—	—	—
Character	—	Clear	Clear	Clear
Reaction	—	6·7	6·9	6·7
Ammonical Nitrogen	·041	·003	·021	·016
Albuminoid Nitrogen	·066	·037	·034	·085
Dissolved Solids	—	100	150	100
{ Total	300	76	80	93
Hardness { Carbonate	—	45	43	26
{ Non Carb.	—	31	37	67
Chlorides	3	10	10	9
Nitrates	1·0	1·220	1·340	—
Nitrites	—	—	—	—
O.2 Absorbed	1·0	·18	·16	·04
Heavy Metals	0	0	0	0
Rainfall 24 hrs.	—	Nil	Nil	Nil
Laboratory	—	Darlington	Darlington	Carlisle

Chemical Analyses expressed in parts per 1,000,000.

